

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
AGENDA  
JULY 2, 2012  
6:30 PM  
ROOM 126**

**ACTON TOWN HALL  
472 MAIN STREET**

Review of Draft Hybrid Farm License Agreement

Working Meeting - Update Open Space & Recreation Plan

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
JULY 2, 2012  
6:30 PM  
ACTON TOWN HALL - 472 MAIN STREET  
ROOM 126**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Andrew Magee, Amy Green, Fran Portante, Jim Colman, Bill Froberg,  
Tom Arnold, Terry Maitland

**CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATOR & RECORDING SECRETARY:** Tom Tidman

**VISITORS:** Jim Snyder-Grant, Wick and Rita McConnon, Judy O'Neill

6:45 Mr. Maitland called the meeting to order.

Discussion - Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

The Commission will vote and appoint Ms. Green, in place of Mr. Magee, to the CPC at the July 18 meeting; to be properly posted with the Clerk.

Review of Draft License Agreement - Hybrid Farm

Mr. Maitland reported that he has reviewed the draft agreement composed by himself, Mr. Arnold, and Mr. Colman.

Mr. Magee noted that he wishes to address public access in section 4.

Area D was discussed; Mr. Arnold noted that this is not included in the first year of improvement goals as it is not as visible.

Mr. Colman suggested that Area D could remain in its current state.

Ms. McConnon inquired as to what 'current state' means for Area D, historically it was more open and currently it is a pine stand.

Ms. Portante stated that Area D should be managed as open land.

Ms. McConnon stated that if Area D was opened up more then she could have more open land for the horses. She could open the area up leaving shade trees.

Mr. Colman stated that the Commission plans to re-issue the license each calendar year and Ms. McConnon has until the end of December to decide what her management plan might be for Area D.

Mr. Magee suggested that it might be better to renegotiate at the end of the riding season instead of January as the condition of the land would be known.

Mr. Colman noted that the renewal submittal should be submitted by the first of October with the final submittal by January 15. The Commission's intent is that the next six months be a transition period and that actual changes with a plan will be with their submittal due January 15.

Mr. Arnold stated that the agreement will allow re-vegetation to start in Areas A, B & C. The Commission's hope is that the re-vegetation would start right away especially in Area C.

Mr. Froberg stated that the difficulty is with the number of action items that need to occur; an 'action plan' with a time table would be helpful.

Mr. Snyder-Grant suggested identifiable action items that could occur first and be accomplished by January 15.

Mr. McConnon stated that it is their intention to make Area C look like Area A.

Mr. Magee stated that it would take two years to establish turf in Area C.

Mr. Arnold stated that he is not concerned about a riding trail becoming established in Area C. Area B is primarily used for Pony Club activities.

Ms. McConnon stated that she does not graze horses in Area B unless a round-pen is erected.

Mr. Colman suggested that use of Area B could be less intense than Areas A & C, however that would be micro-managing.

Mr. Colman stated that Area C seems less suitable for riding due to rockiness; Area B could be used less intensely than Area A.

Ms. McConnon stated that 95% of lessons are done on her own property and on a limited basis Area A would be used for lessons, if the Commission allowed it. She would be sure not to let it become denuded of grass. Area B has been used on a limited basis for Pony Club activities. A round-pen is erected when Area B is used because there is no perimeter fencing.

Mr. Magee suggested that the intensity of use could be established in Area B; currently, it is a nice pasture.

Mr. Colman stated that the Commission is more interested in a natural vegetative cover in Area B; some limited grazing could occur.

Mr. Maitland stated that the license will be reviewed quarterly, the McConnon's now know what the Commission's issues are.

Mr. Froberg suggested that it be decided that Area B just be used for low intensity use.

Regarding fees, Mr. Arnold stated that he found around Acton area that land is leased anywhere between \$500 and \$1,000 per acre.

The McConnons stated that they felt that \$1000 total per year is acceptable and affordable.

Mr. Maitland stated that he feels the Commission is deciding on behalf of the Town to enter into the agreement, \$1000 per year seems reasonable, as this is an honorarium.

Ms. Portante stated that the Commission is relying on the McConnons to be stewards of the land and to look after it.

Mr. Magee stated that if the fee is based around a unit price then the Town runs the risk of setting a precedent.

Judy O'Neill, Hybrid Farm's assistant with Pony Club, stated that Hybrid Farm has 50 kids involved with Pony Club (PC); PC has a conservation component to its goals and activities and could do a community service project each year.

Upon query by Mr. Maitland, the Commission agreed that it is the general consensus that they are in agreement with \$1000 per year.

Number of Horses:

Mr. Colman noted that the Commission does not have quality data pertaining to how many horses per acre is reasonable.

Mr. Magee noted that the McConnons have land (personal property) and can have as many horses as they wish on their property. Does the Commission wish to limit the number of horses at any given time on the town owned property?

Ms. McConnon stated that she needs to bring in younger horses for the kids to use; she would prefer to have 36 horses. Today she has 28 horses and has had up to 34 horses; she cannot run programs with 18 horses; she does not want to work backwards.

Mr. Colman noted that the McConnons have stated that they can maintain the land with 32 horses; activities can be watched for wear and tear more carefully.

Mr. Maitland agreed with allowing 32 horses; this will be adopted into the license.

Public Access to Public Land:

Mr. Colman stated that he is concerned that if lessons are occurring, dogs should not be allowed in that particular area; consideration should be made to figure out how to preclude public access during times of lesson activities.

Mr. Arnold stated that the license document will not encourage public access to Areas A & C. Trail location will be highlighted and the McConnons will be asked to erect additional signs and identify where they will be.

Wetlands Issues:

Ms. McConnon noted that she proposes to discontinue use of the chute between Area B & D as there is an alternative path that will utilize an existing cart path behind the house.

Mr. Magee noted that the Commission may wish to include a 'definitions' section in the document.

Discussion.

Mr. Maitland mentioned the mechanics of surety bonds.

*[See file in the Conservation Office also located in DocuShare: Conservation Commission - 2012 Meetings 07-02-2012 and Conservation Commission - Hybrid Farm – 217 Nagog Hill Road.]*

Next meeting July 18 will start at 6:45 to continue working on the Open Space and Recreation Plan along with other Commission business.

9:20 Meeting adjourned.

  
Terry Maitland  
Chair









TT:ahr  
ahr.concom.minutes.07-02-2012

Location: [Home](#) » [Public Meetings](#) » [Conservation Commission](#) » [2012 Meetings](#) » [07-02-2012 Listing](#)

## 07-02-2012

 [Properties](#)

[Refresh](#)   

Type	Title	Owner	Edited	Size	Actions
	<a href="#">0001 - July 2 Agenda</a>	naturalres	06/27/12	51 KB	  
	<a href="#">Hybrid - Draft License Agreement</a>	naturalres	06/27/12	129 KB	  

### Explore

[Home](#)  
[Content Map](#)  
[What's New](#)  
[Help](#)

### Related Links

[About DocuShare](#)  
[Site Statistics](#)  
[Tutorials](#)  
[DocuShare Downloads](#)

### My Links

[Login \(As a Different User\)](#)  
[My DocuShare](#)  
[Personal Collection](#)  
[Account Settings \(Guest\)](#)

### History

 [07-02-2012 Listing](#)  
 [2012 Meetings Listing](#)  
 [Conservation Commission Listing](#)